

## Delegation Talk for City Council Meeting March 2, 2021

Louise Taylor

- My name is Louise Taylor - I am speaking on behalf of myself and family but I am also a member Millcroft Against Development - MAD
- I am a nurse Practitioner that worked for 36 years at the Hospital for Sick Children and my husband is an Oncologist at the Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton.
- I retired in 2018
- I have lived on Country Club Drive in Burlington for the past 18 years with my husband Hal Hirte and our 4 children
- Our backyard is on the 6<sup>th</sup> fairway of the Millcroft Golf Club.
- When we bought this house to blend our two families together - one of the biggest draws to our home was its location on the golf course
- We could have bought other homes for less money in Millcroft but we were willing to spend the extra money to own a golf course home -
- This was a premium property with a beautiful model home to fit our newly blended family.
- We saw the value of the privacy it offered and the amazing land behind us
  
- Imagine our surprise when we were called to a public meeting in February 2020 with our neighbours to find out that a developer - Argo - had purchased half of the golf club and was planning on tearing it apart to build houses - LOTS of houses.
- This plan would involve completely closing the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> hole and replacing them with almost 100 houses.
- Our wonderful happy place behind our home would be torn up and destroyed.
- This may sound a bit dramatic - but I cried for days...and we were both in shock.
- How could anyone even consider taking away this open space that is teeming with wildlife just to put up more houses?
  
- We bought this beautiful property, and paid a premium for a golf course lot, because we have crazy professional lives.
- We work many hours per week and on weekends and it is impossible to ever get to a cottage or even think of owning and travelling to a weekend summer home.
- We call our deck and back yard our "Happy Place" - and it truly is our cottage.
- You will find us sitting out around our fire pit every night and weekend, from early in the spring to long into the fall.
- We eat outside as much as the weather permits - and sometimes longer with our outdoor heaters.
- We love the sound of the golfers jingling their clubs as they walk the course.
- We feed the birds in the winter and it is quite amazing seeing the different species come to visit the feeders.
- Appleby Creek runs behind our home and is teeming with so many different creatures that it's hard to imagine taking away this precious habitat.
  
- I would like to talk a bit about the world of Appleby Creek that we watch in wonder every single day from our back yard

- The wild life that we see is thriving in its own little ecosystem along the 6<sup>th</sup> fairway - the area that they are planning to dig up and cover with concrete
  - We see our loving mallard duck friends return yearly to nest and raise their babies.
  - The same couple visits us on our deck daily every spring to remind us that they are back
  - They nest nearby in the rushes beside the creek and we see them with their brood until they are old enough to fly away.
  - The squirrels, rabbits, minks, yes and even raccoons are happily living in this area - and they have plenty of food so we never have an issue with them raiding our garbage cans - a true sign that they are thriving in their habitat
  - We have seen more bird species that I can ever name.
  - They love the trees that line the course and busily build their nests and raise their chicks safe from any threat from people
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- I'd also like to talk about some of the more frightening things that can happen in Appleby Creek
  - This creek is usually a lovely meandering stream that is the watershed for the city flowing towards the lake.
  - It normally trickles quietly along
  - But we have seen this little stream become a raging torrent
  - When we have had big rainfall - heavy over a short time period- this formerly quiet little stream becomes a wide fast flowing river
  - Although we have been told that these rainstorms are once in a lifetime - we have been witness to MANY rainstorms that flood this little creek
  - We have even seen one rainfall so heavy that the pond at the end of the street - the catch basin - overflowed and flooded Upper Middle road under the railway tracks and create a lake
  - How could any developer even think that putting houses on this area would work
  - If there a floods now - how can the area possibly handle 100 houses build on the creek with all the concrete and rain run off the roofs
  - Who would ever want to buy one of these houses with the chance that a flood would fill their basements every time it rains.
  - We take the good with the bad living where we do -
  - we thank the original planners of Millcroft for working with nature to put the houses where they are with the open spaces necessary to deal with runoff and let nature thrive
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- There are many issues that will arise if this development gets approved - that we are committed to try to convince you madame mayor and councillors to stop before they happen
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- We already have a problem with the volume of traffic on Country Club Drive making it almost impossible to back out of our driveway during rush hour.
  - We cannot imagine the noise level and constant rumbling of construction vehicles that would invade the area for years to come
  - And how will our Millcroft families that have to deal with lung issues like asthma or post COVID lung damage, deal with the dust and dirt that will surely pollute our air and make the area unlivable outside?

- I am speaking for myself and my family today but am a hard working member of the MAD group that has been formed to convince you at the City Council to say no to this development.
- I am proud to be a part of this group of neighbours that are organizing to convince you that changing this area is a bad idea on so many levels
- We are a group of like-minded neighbours that only want the best for one of the most beautiful neighbourhoods in Burlington
- We want to let the city of Burlington and the developer know we do NOT want to lose our green space, or have homes crammed in behind our properties.
  
- Our little group has become a big voice to end the quest for this developer who thinks he can just buy up open spaces, change the designation to residential and squeeze houses onto this wonderful land
- We are committed for the long haul to do everything we can to stop this development and destruction of the golf course.
  
- I have the energy and the time to do what I can to fight this development in my backyard and in our whole neighbourhood
- I was not surprised that after our first meeting of the MAD committee, and a call to action - we got such an amazing response from the whole neighbourhood.
- Apparently, there are a lot of people in this beautiful area of Burlington with a passion as deep as mine to keep Millcroft the wonderful open space that it is.
  
- One more thing I would like to add - and a very special result of all this.
  
- I have met more of my neighbours than I ever imagined - and seen the incredible dedication of the administrative team that has made all of this possible.
  
- As much as this has been a difficult issue and some crazy circumstances - I have made a lot of new friends.

In summary, Millcroft is the most beautiful area in Burlington. Letting a developer come in and change the zoning to build houses on the green space is unthinkable. This area is a haven for our residents. Taking away the land that so many species live on is a crime. Building homes on a known flood plane is irresponsible.

We are committed to stopping this plan - and my neighbours and I are MAD enough to persist with this battle as long as it takes us. Please consider our plea to stop this application for development in its entirety.

Thank You